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The *ejido* program in Tepoztlán has meant that 267 families, who were formerly landless, now have some land. However, the size of landholdings is too small to support Tepoztecan peasants according to their own standards. That the *ejido* has not really solved the land problem is of course due in part to the small amount of land that could be distributed, for Tepoztlán is surrounded on three sides by municipios which have their own communal lands. The *ejido* program has also had disruptive effects in the village in that it has created two distinct interest groups, the *ejidatarios* and the *tlacololeros*. Furthermore, taking the control of the communal lands away from the local municipal authorities has eliminated a source of municipal revenue, and thereby weakened local government and initiative. At the same time, it has increased centralism and made the municipio even more dependent upon the outside.

The deforestation occurring in the municipio and the refusal of Tepoztecans to abide by the regulation of the forestry department point up an important problem of more than local scope. Much has been written about the superstitious and backward Mexican peasant who opposes progress and sticks to his ancient way of life. Too frequently the specific reasons which lead to resistance to change are not sufficiently understood.

The case of Tepoztlán is typical. The livelihood of hundreds of Tepoztecan families depends upon hillside hoe culture and charcoal burning, two activities which by their very nature destroy forest resources and bring about soil erosion. Many Tepoztecans are aware that the forest resources are their greatest wealth and that failure to conserve them may lead to eventual ruin. But they are caught on the horns of the dilemma of a rapidly rising population and limited natural resources. It is no less than absurd to expect peasants to abide by rules which would deprive them of their food supply. In the light of the Tepoztecan material, it would seem essential that national programs of forest and soil conservation be carefully synchronized with other programs which will give the people alternative sources of income, if they are to give up hillside hoe culture and charcoal burning.

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tamiento. He organizes the nightly village watch and makes arrests when necessary.

During the dry season the government offices are generally open between 9:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M. and between 4:00 P.M. and 7:00 P.M. During the agricultural season the hours are much more irregular, and oftentimes the officials close the offices and go to their fields to plant or cultivate. The same thing happens during the harvest.

The salaries paid to officials are extremely low, even by Tepoztecan standards. They are paid a daily rate in pesos as follows:

President	3.00
Síndico	2.00
Regidor	2.00
Secretary	2.50
Treasurer	2.50
Chief of police	2.00
Assistant to chief	1.75
Porter	1.50
Judge	1.00
Secretary to judge	1.50

These low salaries are one of the factors which encourage graft on the part of the officials.

The village officials are mostly from the larger barrios of San Miguel, La Santísima, and Santo Domingo. A review of the officeholders since 1920 showed that not a single president was from San Pedro, Los Reyes, or San Sebastián. The reasons given for this are as follows: (1) the smaller barrios have traditionally been viewed as the more backward barrios and without political power; (2) residents of the small barrios say that only dishonest people seek the presidency, that they have connections with politicians in Cuernavaca, and that they have some funds for propaganda. Most of the presidents and officials between 1920 and 1943 could read and write, and included individuals who were highly acculturated and little acculturated. In 1943 all the officials wore huaraches while at work, but all could read and write.

The sources of income of the municipio are varied and are shown in the following budget for the year 1943:[a]

	Income (Pesos)
Traveling merchants[b]	50
Public diversions (movies)[c]	20
Slaughter of animals	2,500
Service for water	300

[a] These data were copied from local records and are official estimates of budget income. Generally the income is about 1,000 pesos below these estimates.

[b] The very small income obtained from traveling merchants reflects the decadence of the local market and the paucity of merchants from other areas.

[c] The municipio receives a ten per cent tax on the gross receipts from movies. The small

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	Income (Cont.) (Pesos)
Certificates and copies	200
Charge for entries in the civil register	50
Exemption of publication of acts of the civil register [a]	700
Corral de consejo	50
Tax on cattle	300
Commercial and industrial register	200
Registration of cattle brands	200
Registration of private documents	400
Miscellaneous authorizations	50
Tax on use of the market and plaza	500
Burial permits	300
Taxes on use of communal resources	800
Payments in lieu of public service and non-specified income	1,000
Ten per cent tax on commercial and industrial enterprises	200
Income from the state	150
Income from the state and federal governments as specified by particular laws	500
Fines imposed for infractions of laws	230
Products from sale of *Bienes Mostrencos y Hallazgos de Tesoro Ocultos*	200
Gifts to the municipio	200
Total	9,200

It can be seen that almost fifty per cent of the income of the municipio is derived from four sources: the slaughter of animals, the payment of residents in lieu of working twelve days a year in public service, the exemption of publication of acts in the civil register, and taxes from the use of communal resources.

The income of the municipio over a twelve-year period from 1931 to 1943 (data for 1936 were not available) is shown as follows:

Year	*Income* (Pesos) [a]
1931	4,360.74
1932	2,586.35
1933	4,855.91

[a] The figures for 1931 are for ten months, and those for 1932 are for six months. All others are for a twelve-month period.

income from this source indicates how rarely movies or other public entertainment comes to the village.

[b] According to state law, marriages and other acts recorded in the register should be officially announced by posted notices in the *ayuntamiento* and in the official government bulletin. But Tepoztecans shun this kind of publicity and by paying a special fee can avoid it. The same thing occurs in relation to the reading of the marriage banns by the priest. By special payment this also can be avoided.

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Year	*Income* (Pesos)
1934	4,011.80
1935	3,742.60
1936	—
1937	5,162.49
1938	4,795.75
1939	6,494.70
1940	7,088.58
1941	6,467.74
1942	7,617.03
1943	7,568.99

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Since the salaries of the officials amounted to over seven thousand pesos per year (during the forties), it is obvious that there was little money left over for public improvements. This is one of the demoralizing factors in local government and also one of the reasons that the Tepoztecans generally look to the federal government for help. Each president who enters office promises to do something for his pueblo. But he soon learns that there are no funds, not to mention the other difficulties. To make matters worse, many villagers are convinced that the local government officials, especially the president, *síndico*, *regidor*, and secretary, are dishonest and have a large income from illegal dealings. But this does not deny the fact that the official income is much too meager for any significant public works program with local funds.

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It will be noted that the municipio has practically no income from land taxes. Most of the taxes on land goes to the state government. The state government collected over sixty thousand pesos in taxes in the twelve years between 1931 and 1943 for which data are available.[8] During this entire period the only state funds which went back to the village were for the salary of the state tax collector who was paid on a pro rata basis.

The taxes which go to the federal government are considerably smaller than those which go to the state. Federal taxes taken out of Tepoztlán are shown in the following:

Year	*Pesos*
1938	2,529.86
1939	2,455.04
1940	—
1941	3,118.99
1942	3,794.55
1943	3,568.77

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The routine business of the local government consists primarily of issuing permits for various types of activities. The most frequent requests include the following:

Permits for fiestas, religious and secular
Permits for slaughter of animals

[8] These data were obtained from the official state tax records in Cuernavaca.

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[1941-1942]

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latter had control of the forests. The municipal president maintained that the commissariat should not have authority in matters of forestry. There was a certain amount of hatred between them, though not declared. The council was seeking funds to meet the outstanding expenses which were incurred within the municipal administration. Seeing that there were no sources of revenue, the council voted to call together on a certain day all the charcoal makers and to ask them for their cooperation; that is, that they should give one day's work to cut down trees and cut them into logs, so that they might make charcoal kilns for the benefit of the council, and that the profits from those kilns would go into the municipal treasury.

All agreed to accept and to meet on the appointed day in the appointed place to cut the trees. The charcoal makers only cut about ten trees, which yielded little money for the council's purposes. There was nothing to do about it but give in, because only enough money came of it to pay the person who watched over the furnace when it was burning. [652] The municipal president despaired more than ever, because he saw that the money coming into the municipal treasury was barely enough to pay the few miserable salaries of the township employees. Not even the police could afford three men to keep watch over the peace.

The municipal president did not give up. He wanted to follow faithfully what he had promised. He began to work to improve the public market, soliciting federal aid. When it came to the ears of the dwellers in the town that there was a question of building the market, some of them immediately went to the municipal president's office; they made it clear that if such a market were to be completed, their properties in that vicinity must be respected. The municipal president demanded documentation to substantiate the true ownership of the small pieces of land which were within the property belonging to the township. Most of them presented their documents, and they reached a settlement that it would be preferable to pick the property by lot, in agreement with the owners. And, together with the council, they would finish the rooms which would be used for trade. As was said before, all this reached the stage of study but nothing more was ever done.

About the month of August of the second year of his administration, Fulgencio Campos admitted that he was failing in his intention to bring about some improvement for the town. He decided to play his last card and pave the public gardens. This time he [367] interviewed not the civil authorities but the military. It happened at the time that federal [653] workers were within the township breaking stone for the highway. Campos interviewed the chief of the military zone and set forth all the reasons for his aspirations and his desire to leave some work for his people. The military chief agreed that a few of the trucks which were being used to carry stone for the highway should be left at the municipal president's office so that they might be utilized in the paving of the public gardens. The trucks arrived right away, and the council tried to raise funds to pay for the sand and cement. The council agreed that the work should be completed after the end of the rainy season, that is, about the month of October, so that the rains would not slow up the work of the paving.

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The day of the national celebrations, that is, the sixteenth of September, the comptroller, Saturnino Córdova, who was commissioned to list the animals at the slaughterhouse, got drunk with some friends. Most of his acquaintances were men in the meat business.

On the seventeenth it was learned that Córdova had disappeared and could not be found anywhere. About five in the afternoon a woman reported a corpse in a ravine near

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the municipal slaughterhouse. The authorities took the corpse to the Town Hall for identification, because birds of prey had already mutilated the face and part of the body. The investigations began, and finally it was known that Córdova had been murdered inside the slaughterhouse and his body thrown into the ravine. 175 646 682

At that time there was also an investigation going on in the office of the under secretary of the Ministerio Público for cattle stealing. It was discovered that the lost animals had been slaughtered in the municipal slaughterhouse, and that the animals had been stolen by the same persons who had murdered Córdova because he was trying to discover the thieves. The council aided Córdova's family with burial and what was necessary to settle a few other expenses. The council proceeded to call the alternate for the comptroller's office, to take charge of the post which Córdova had been filling. [685]

In a short time the cement necessary for the paving of the public gardens was bought. Only half of the job could be done, and this only with the councillors giving a part of their pay. An additional sum of fifty pesos, which had been given by a woman toward the pipe line for drinking water, also went into the paving of the public gardens and the fixing of benches. The president, on leaving his post, got into a suit over this fifty pesos; the people said he had stolen it. 175 646 663

ADMINISTRATION OF 1943–44

On the first of January, 1943, the only candidates who had taken part in the elections of the first Sunday in December were inaugurated: Municipal President, Emilio Martínez; Comptroller, Benito Vargas; and Attorney General, Carlos Quiroz. In the first council meeting they decided to increase the taxes of the township for the purpose of town improvements. All those who take office as presidents are always eager to improve their town. The council in agreement with the Commissariat of the Ejidos, who had some funds for the development of the forests, took those funds and bought the necessary cement and sand to finish the paving of the public gardens. And the work was finished in a few weeks. [666] [652] [367] [653]

There came a fiesta at which people drank too much, and as this municipal president, Emilio Martínez, had many friends, who were constantly inviting him to have a drink, he drank all that day. When evening came and it was getting dark, he was completely drunk. Upon getting into the bus he met another man who was also far gone, and they started a commotion. They went from words to blows and from blows to kicks. When Martínez saw the other man stretched out, he began to kick him until his relatives and the police intervened. Of course, the man was taken to jail, and although he had received the blows from Martínez, he was fined five pesos. 175 646 661

Martínez had a son who was completing his military service. In a short time stories began to circulate to the effect that young Mexican men were going to be sent to war, which was then at its height. Undoubtedly they hinted this to Martínez. According to the story they tell, he organized a band of bad fellows, and on the Sunday when his son was en route to the barracks this band attacked the vehicle in which he was riding. Martínez claimed that his son had been kidnapped by bandits, but the matter did not end there. The state governor gave orders to the chief of the judicial police, and one day when Martínez was in the city he was apprehended and taken to the state penitentiary at the disposition of the governor of the state. As soon as the other members of the council learned that Martínez was being held in prison, they called the comptroller, as was provided in the law, to take the office of municipal president for seventy days. The comp